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## **Sen. Toy encouraged by governor's commitment to jobs and economic growth**

**LANSING** – Sen. Laura Toy, R-Livonia, was encouraged to hear the governor's commitment to work with legislators on creating jobs and spurring Michigan's economy during her State of the State Address Tuesday night.

Meanwhile, Sen. Toy continues to keep her pledge to fight for every Michigan job and said she and her colleagues stand ready to work with the governor to accomplish what is best for Michigan residents.

"Michigan has entered a new era," Toy said. "The hardworking families of this state are counting on us to make the right decisions, the decisions that will help restore our state to its rightful place as a leader in new, high-paying jobs, as an innovator in the global economy, and second-to-none as the best place to live, work and raise a family."

While the nation's economic recovery has been well underway, families in Michigan are still facing the prospect of an unemployment check instead of a regular paycheck.

In 2004, Michigan was the only state with a net job loss. Michigan and one other state have continued to have the highest unemployment rates in the nation at 7.3 percent in December; nearly two percent above the national unemployment rate.

Toy cited the "New Economy" legislative initiative recently announced by Senate leaders as an important step to getting Michigan's economy back on track. The package is focused on improving Michigan's economy by boosting the state's high-tech sector.

"Developing Michigan's high-tech sector will help bring high-paying jobs to our state," Toy said. "Yet we need to partner with our educators on training and retraining in order to truly succeed in our new economy."

While Michigan has made major investments in life sciences over the past four years, the state is not truly reaping the economic benefits of that investment. A 2004 study ranked Michigan 37<sup>th</sup> in the nation in risk capital and infrastructure, just above states like Wyoming, Kansas, Iowa and Montana, whose economies rely heavily on natural resources.

Legislation from the package, unveiled last week, will be introduced in the coming weeks, in addition to legislation designed to improve agriculture across the state of Michigan.

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